

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 12, 2005

The Honorable Michael Johanns
Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
14th Street and Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We noted with great interest your recent announcement during an interview with the National Association of Farm Broadcasters that you intend to conduct a series of listening sessions across the country concerning the development of the next farm bill.

We encourage you to conduct one of these sessions in our state of North Dakota. As you are aware, North Dakota is a major producer of agricultural commodities and leads the nation in the production of many traditional program crops, including spring and durum wheat, barley, oats, dry peas and minor oilseeds. Domestic agricultural policy is of great importance to the farmers and ranchers of North Dakota as well as our rural communities, main street businesses, and higher education institutions.

We would be pleased to offer whatever assistance we can provide you in arranging and promoting a USDA farm program listening session in North Dakota. Please feel free to contact us to identify the ways in which we might help make such a session a success for both the Department and the thousands of North Dakota farmers, ranchers and businessmen who have a stake in the outcome of the next farm bill.

Sincerely,



KENT CONRAD
United States Senate



BYRON DORGAN
United States Senate



EARL POMEROY
Member of Congress